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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DJIBOUTI 000079

SIPDIS

OBO FOR DIRECTOR WILLIAMS  
OBO/PD/PEA/CPB FOR PAUL THORN  
OBO/PD/PDD FOR MAHFUZUR RAHMAN  
OBO/AM FOR FRANKLIN WHITE  
AF/EX FOR STEVE NOLAN AND VIRGINIA MILHOUS  
AF/E FOR EUNICE REDDICK

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AMGT](#) [ABLD](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: DJIBOUTI RESPONSE TO PROPOSED  
REVISIONS TO SRP

REF (A) E-MAIL - REVISIONS TO DJIBOUTI SRP

(01/12/06)

(B) E-MAIL - DJIBOUTI/TASKER #10210  
ATTACHMENTS (01/17/2006)

(C) 05 Djibouti 1111

1. Post has reviewed the cost saving measures proposed in OBO's most recent Value Engineering (VE) study as outlined in Refs A and B. While some of the proposed changes are acceptable, post feels that it is critical to oppose proposed changes that - coupled with the extreme climate of this country and the cultural isolation here - will result in severely negative impacts on post operations and morale that will further erode efforts to staff this growing Hard-to-Fill post.

2. Chancery Large to Medium: Post agrees that downsizing the footprint of the chancery is a logical cost savings measure provided that any future growth can be accommodated through expansion of the chancery or annexes on the existing compound. However, post cautions that moving offices from annex buildings (as proposed) and adding the cafeteria into a smaller chancery building will create immediate space limitations that must be managed.

3. Removal of swimming pool and cabana: Post strongly objects to the removal of the pool and cabana from the NEC. The existing Embassy compound incorporates a pool that is a center of Embassy community activity especially over the summer months. With daily average high temperatures above 120 during summer months and extremely high humidity, employees and family members rely upon the current facilities. The embassy pool is a secure location for family activities that is not replicated anywhere in Djibouti. Removal of the pool from the NEC will further erode our ability to attract employees to this growing post. Since MSG watch-standers are not authorized vehicles, the MSG Detachment will also benefit from having an on-site, secure recreational outlet. If the pool is not included in the NEC, post requests OBO support to maintain possession of the existing Embassy compound with recreation facilities which, other than at the Sheraton Hotel, do not exist for the public. Post will adamantly oppose any course of action that will result in the loss of secure recreation facilities that are essential to our efforts to attract and retain employees. (See Ref C for other justifications for keeping the existing compound)

4. Removal of Chancery Atrium: Post requires a central gathering location where awards ceremonies, town-hall meetings and other formal (and informal) events can be held. Employees are not able to escape the confines of their office buildings during the summer months. Removal of the atrium will have a negative impact on morale of employees at post, will create a tomb-like atmosphere and will prevent post from holding events that require a central meeting area for a significant portion of the year due to the extreme summer conditions and normally humid and

uncomfortable conditions except in January and February.

15. Reducing Staff Parking: Reducing the number of Staff parking places may provide an immediate cost-savings, but the long-term result will be costly maintenance of existing green-space and loss of additional parking as the embassy grows. Maintaining grounds in Djibouti consumes significant resources relative to maintaining similar areas at other posts because of the need for continuous watering and top soil replenishment. Post recommends that the parking area remain at 71 spaces. Asphalt is far less costly to maintain in Djibouti than grass, trees or flowers.

RAGSDALE